morrison-rockwood

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THE PARK

Morrison-Rockwood State Park became a reality in 1971 when the Illinois General Assembly approved legislation authorizing its establishment and providing funds for its development. The 1152-acre park, in northwestern Illinois, is in Whiteside County two and one-half miles north of Morrison near Route 78. Previously named Whiteside County Conservation Area, Morrison-Rockwood officially opened for day use only in September, 1971.

The name Morrison-Rockwood came about through a combination of the town Morrison and the fact that the park is near a portion of the Rock Creek and that it is heavily wooded.

THE LAKE

Lake Carlton, a watershed impoundment of 77 acres, is the focal point of the park. The lake is stream fed and blocked by a dam with a road across it. Its average depth is 12 feet with a maximum depth of 27 feet and a shoreline of 2.9 miles. The lake basin and the 38-feet high, 1800-feet long earthen dam were constructed in 1969 and the lake was filled by the fall of 1970.

The lake was named in memory of L. Carlton Anderson, a Morrison resident who, with a group of Morrison citizens, actively promoted this area for several years before its dedication in August, 1972.

Mr. Anderson was born in Chapin, Illinois, July 2, 1905. He came to Morrison in 1930 and married Betty Yohn there. He was active in many community affairs and held various offices. Anderson was president of the Whiteside County Bank at the time of his death in 1971.

THE NATURAL SCENE

Within the park is an abundance of wildlife. A few of the animals a visitor may see are rabbits, squirrels, quails, pheasants, foxes, muskrats, minks, groundhogs and deer. Ducks and geese are often seen swimming on the lake while the water has a variety of fish which the angler will appreciate.

Bird watchers will find good viewing at this park as there are about 160 species of birds to observe. The trees they live in are mostly hardwoods such as hickory, ash, oak and walnut.

UNUSUAL FEATURE

A modern day blacksmith artist from Morrison fashioned in angle iron the outline of the state of Illinois for the entrance sign. This has been mounted on a stone base with a mesh insert and was donated by the Lions Club of Morrison.

FACILITIES

Picnicking: Tables and outdoor stoves are in secluded, shaded picnic areas. One area has cleared individual picnic sites with surrounding vegetation for privacy, paths into the areas are graveled and garbage cans lined with plastic bags are conveniently located.

Another picnic area is a natural woodland site just cleared enough for the tables and fireplaces to be placed. It is on a wooded ridge overlooking the lake. There is one well for drinking water in the area and several modern outdoor toilets.

Camping: Limited camping is available in a wooded area of the park.

Fishing: The angler has the opportunity to catch a variety of fish, including largemouth bass, rock bass, channel catfish, redear sunfish and bluegill. Initial stocking of fish was completed in 1970. In addition to the shoreline, there are 9 piers for use solely by fishermen. Minnow fishing is not allowed.

Boating: Outboard motors are restricted to 10 H.P. and under. All boats with motors are to be operated at a slow, no wake speed to protect the shoreline from wave erosion. A two-lane concrete boat ramp and an area for private boat dockage are provided.

Hiking: There are a lot of wilderness hiking areas, not just trails, and several rolling meadows. An old quarry is along a stream northwest of the lake and fossils can be found in the limestone.

Winter Sports: When the weather gets cold enough, ice fishing and ice skating are permitted on the lake. Sledding along the rolling hills is also popular.

Please: The park is for all to enjoy so help keep it clean. All pets must be on a 10-foot leash or less. Swimming is not permitted. The park closes at 9 p.m.

Park Map

FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .

Admittance will not be granted groups of 25 or more persons to any state park or conservation area unless permission from the park ranger has been secured to use facilities. It is also required that groups of minors have adequate supervision and that at least one responsible adult accompany each group not exceeding 15 minors.

Numerous State Parks and Memorials are within easy access to every part of the state. Lodges, cabins and dining rooms are important features of Illinois Beach, Starved Rock, Pere Marquette, White Pines Forest, and Giant City State Parks. Reservations for lodging should be made with lodge managers.

All state parks are open the year round, except when weather conditions necessitate the closing of park roads during freezing and thawing periods when access to park facilities is by foot traffic only.

For further information concerning Illinois State Parks and Memorials write to the Division of Education, Department of Conservation, State Office Building, Springfield 62706.

MORRISON-ROCKWOOD
STATE PARK
LAKE CARLTON

Richard B. Ogilvie, Governor

THE NEW ILLINOIS

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